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For 1878.
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H. HATTEBORN WILCOX.
Daily Press Office,
Hongkong, 1st January, 1878.

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"P.N."—You are mistaken in your estimate.

"Vex."—Declined as unsuitable.

The Daily Press.

HONGKONG, MAY 8th, 1878.

Without any desire to be captious, we must confess we fail to see the necessity for the alteration in the title hitherto borne by the head of the Marine Department in this Colony suggested by His Excellency the Governor at the last meeting of the Legislative Council. The position is an important one, and is fully understood to be so. It does not require the imposing title of "Captain of the Port" to render Captain TROMBET respected or obeyed. The term "Harbour-Master" has been used here for a great number of years, and it is difficult to discover any valid reason for changing it. At the present time everyone—including the natives—knows where the Harbour-Master's office is, and it would be inconvenient to change the term, while the more style is not worth a thought. Of course it is right and proper that an officer acting in this capacity should receive the title due to his office. But there is nothing to show that he does not receive it: "Harbour-Master" is the title generally bestowed on the head of the Marine Department in the Crown Colonies. In some of the head of the Department is called the Master Attendant; in Gibraltar—and, we believe, nowhere else—is styled the Captain of the Port. The matter is, of course, one of very little real importance—Captain TROMBET or Mr. TROMBET by any other name than Harbour-Master would not doubt small as sweet—but why make alteration which can do no good and may cause some inconveniences and trouble?

The Reuters telegrams lately received show that the situation in Europe is growing daily more critical. War is evidently looked forward to by the people of both Russia and England, and preparations for the conflict are going on in both countries on a large scale. It is difficult, however, to ascertain exactly what position the various small nationalities of Eastern Europe will take up in the event of a war between England and Russia. That they will be neutral is unlikely, as their future will be so much affected by the issue of the struggle. Serbia's faithfulness is reported to be increasing her armaments, making ready, doubtless, for fresh strife. She will probably join the Czar in his new campaign, if it be decided upon, though she has been grumbling at the small addition to her territory secured to her by the Treaty of San Stefano, and which is less than that given to Montenegro. The latter principality has, we imagine, obtained as much as she could hope for, even the cession to her. She also would join Russia in any new contest. Roumania, however, would not be so inclined. She has been treated shamefully by the Government of St. Petersburg, first having been by force of circumstances drawn into the war, and then, after rendering most important assistance in the overthrow of Osman's army, she is to be plundered instead of being rewarded. No wonder that the Roumanians are discontented, no wonder that they repeat ever having shed their blood and contributed of their resources to further the ambitious schemes of Russia. Greece would be pretty certain to join England, with enthusiasm. The Greeks have nothing to hope from the Russians, and are bitterly antagonistic to them. The enlarged boundaries of Bulgaria—which province is, under the new treaty, brought down to the shores of the Aegean, and comprehends nearly the whole of Roumelia—not only serves to extinguish all hopes of any considerable extension of the Greek kingdom, but is likely to be a constant menace to its independence. The Greeks, therefore, under all circumstances, will be certain to espouse the English cause should the present dispute end in open rupture.

Turkey has, it is said, decided that she will observe a policy of neutrality. It is difficult to imagine how, in her present plight, with the Muscovite heel on her neck she could do otherwise unless she joined her conqueror. The fact that she has chosen the former course is a convincing proof that all the Russian wives have failed to turn the Turks against their former friend, and that they will not fight against her if they can not join her. But it is doubtful whether, in the event of war breaking out, the Russians meeting with reverses, the Turks will not again enter the field and attempt to repair their fortunes. Russia has shown that no treaty can bind her; she will not be able to compel it of the Turks should they see the Treaty of San Stefano in her face by and by.

The "Trade Report" has a large circulation in Hongkong, and is a valuable source of information.

Hongkong, 1st October, 1877.

The bark *Lerna* from Newcastle, N.S.W., for Maitland on the 6th inst.

The British ship *Edith*, Captain Arnold, arrived at Newcastle, N.S.W., on the 6th inst.

The delivery of the American mail steamer at 4:30 yesterday afternoon. It arrived from Tientsin.

The British steamer *Bertha*, Captain Langley, from Australia, brought up 1,800 ounces of gold.

A number of hawkers were brought before the magistrate yesterday, charged with having without a license, and were fined fifty cents and lost.

The British steamer *Charles*, Captain Johnson, completed her trip from Hongkong to Peking, thence to Saigon and Hongkong in thirty-seven days.

The American bark *Harmon*, Captain Wynn, and the German schooner *Helene*, Captain Kasper, are loading at Newcastle, N.S.W., for Hongkong.

A parade and inspection of the Volunteer and Government Fire Brigades will take place at the Fire Brigade Station, Cross Roads, tomorrow, at half-past four o'clock p.m.

The British gunboat *Lynx*, Commander G. W. Scott, and *Seymour*, Lieutenant Commander Tudor, returned to harbour yesterday, having been out for target practice at Tientsin Harbour.

The American schooner *W. H. Dale* left Newcastle, N.S.W., for Hongkong on the 6th inst.

The British schooner *Countess of Derby*, Captain Taylor, left Newcastle on the 6th inst.

The M. M. steamer *Tanaka*, which arrived from Yokohama yesterday afternoon, brought down the American mail per City of Peking, which steamer broke a boiler shortly after leaving Yokohama, and had to put back for repairs.

A naval court-martial will take place this morning at 10 o'clock, at the Royal Naval Dock, on the case of a private in the Royal Marine Light Infantry, for striking his superior officer, the first lieutenant of the British gunboat *Gravel*, on the 4th April.

A Chinese pilot who came in on Monday, reports that about fifty miles outside he saw an American full-rigged ship with one of her masts gone. She is said to be the American ship *John*, which was last seen off the coast of Oregon, on the 1st inst.

The *Japan Gazette* says that an American paper reports that Captain Thomas Pabody, late-master of the C. O. *Whitmore*, has been arrested and is now held for trial at Boston on a charge of having murdered the male James Ellwood, who he is reported to have treated with unusual cruelty. Our readers will have this notorious case fresh in their recollection.

The *Japan Gazette* of the 27th ult. says:—"During this week sundry parcels of new crops have arrived in Yokohama, finding purchasers at from \$50 to \$55 per picul, this morning's average from \$55 to \$60 per picul. The crops of sugar, arrived with three hundred packages, equal to about 180 piculs. Samples of this shipment had not, this afternoon, appeared in the market."

The *Northern Territory Times* says:—"The Chinese that arrived by the *Bertha* have nearly all gone up country, where it is to be hoped they will find a more congenial life than in the port of Hongkong, and as there are others known to be on the way, we are glad to learn the Government have advised the authorities in Hongkong that we have quite enough. It is no use their coming here to be housed in the prison, and to be kept in a cage, as they are not the same people as the manager of the E. S. and A. C. Bank, that 200 ounces of gold was received by them on the 4th inst. The Chinese on the *Bertha* appear to be going moderately well—about 80 ounces came from this district."

Yesterday morning a disturbance occurred in the Victoria Club, caused by some of the prisoners undergoing sentences from the district. The Acting Superintendent, about two dozen of the prisoners, through loud conduct, were ordered to leave the club, and they then proceeded to the dock, where they were taken to the prison.

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